

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5143

S E C R E T BUCHAREST 1434

EXDIS NOFORN

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT, RO

SUBJECT: CALL ON PRIME MINISTER MAURER

1. SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER MAURER, WHO HAS RESUMED OFFICIAL ACTIVITY, PERHAPS ON LIMITED BASIS, TOLD AMBASSADOR IN 90- MINUTE TALK APRIL 17 THAT ROMANIA'S MAIN AND CONTINUING CONCERN IS TO PURSUE A COURSE OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE; ROMANIA IS APPREHENSIVE THAT US MIGHT OVER- DO ITS BILATERAL DEALINGS WITH USSR, WITH BLOC- TO- BLOC EMPHASIS, CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS AND REACHING DECISIONS IN PROCESS WHOSE TOTALITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO SMALLER COUNTRIES. ROMANIA'S FORCED- DRAFT PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPOSES HEAVY BURDENS ON ROMANIAN PEOPLE AND MAY BE OVER- AMBITIOUS. ROMANIA WILL MAKE ALL POSSIBLE EFFORTS TO SUCCEED, IS VERY DESIROUS OF INCREASED TRADE AND INVESTMENT (JOINT VENTURES) WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES, MIGHT HAVE TO APPEAL TO LATTER FOR HELP IN CASE OF ECONOMIC CRUNCH TO SAVE ROMANIA FROM RETURN TO DEPENDENCE ON USSR. END SUMMARY.

2. I PAID FAREWELL CALL APRIL 17 ON PRIME MINISTER MAURER AND HAD ONE AND A HALF HOUR CONVERSATION. MAURER WAS IN HIS OFFICE AT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, APPEARED SOMEWHAT OLDER, MORE TIRED, AND LESS VIGOROUS PHYSICALLY THAN WHEN I LAST SAW HIM, BUT BECAME ANIMATED IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION AND TALKED WITH ACCUSTOMED WIT AND INCISIVENESS ON VARIETY OF SUBJECTS. MAURER AT CONCLUSION ASKED THAT CONVERSATION BE HELD CLOSELY SO AS NOT TO REACH EARS FOR WHICH IT WAS NOT INTENDED (MOSCOW).

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3. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION MAURER COVERED LARGE AREA OF SUBJECT MATTER. POINTS OF PRINCIPAL INTEREST CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) U. S. EMBARKING ON COURSE OF SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH USSR AND CHINA COULD HAVE DECISIVE IMPORTANCE FOR FUTURE WORLD RELATIONSHIPS.

(B) PROCESS HOLDS PITFALLS AS WELL AS PROMISE: GREAT POWERS MAY BE TEMPTED TO DISPOSE BY THEMSELVES OF ISSUES FUNDAMENTALLY AFFECTING SMALLER AND MIDDLE STATES. THIS COULD DO MUCH DAMAGE TO INTERESTS OF LATTER. IN MAURER'S VIEW, GROWTH IN NUMBER OF GREAT POWERS WOULD BE SALUTARY; CHINA WAS COMING INTO GROUP, ALSO WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN; "IN GREATER NUMBERS THERE WILL BE GREATER SAFETY".

(C) ANOTHER PITFALL WOULD BE TENDENCY OF US, USSR, AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO DISREGARD NEEDS OF GREAT MASSES OF PEOPLE LIVING IN RADICALLY SUB- STANDARD CONDITIONS IN UNDER- DEVELOPPED COUNTRIES. THIS WAS NOT EVEN PRIMARILY MORAL QUESTION. NUMBERS OF THESE MASSES INCREASING FAR FASTER THAN POPULATIONS IN DEVELOPPED COUNTRIES. IF NEEDS OF GROWING MASSES ARE NEGLECTED, ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES IN INTERNATIONAL DISTURBANCE WILL DWARF A MANIFESTATION SUCH AS PALESTINE LIBERATION MOVEMENT AND ARAB TERRORISM, WITH GRAVE DAMAGE TO "CIVILIZED COUNTRIES AND THEIR VALUES".

(D) ROMANIA PURSUES POLICY BASED ON PRINCIPLES, RATHER THAN ON DOMINANCE OF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH, BOTH TO ADVANCE ITS OWN NATIONAL INTEREST AND BECAUSE IT SEES SUCCESSFUL PURSUIT OF POLICY AS BENEFITTING PEOPLES OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND ULTIMATELY CONTRIBUTING TO A MORE SECURE AND JUST FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. IF ROMANIA CAN SUCCEED, OTHERS (EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES) WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO TRY SAME COURSE ACCORDING TO THEIR POSSIBILITIES.

(E) IT MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ROMANIAN PROGRAM OF RAPID ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPOSES BURDENS AND AUSTERITY ON ROMANIAN POPULATION, THAT INCENTIVES AND VISIBLE PROGRESS IN CURRENT STANDARD OF LIVING ARE IMPORTANT IN STIMULATING MAXIMUM EFFORT TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC GOALS. BUT FORCED- DRAFT AUSTERE PROGRAM IS NECESSARY IF ROMANIA IS TO MAINTAIN NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. ROMANIA IS MAKING A BIG EFFORT IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE TASKS SET MAY TURN OUT TO BE TOO DIFFICULT. DECISIONS HAVE IN ANY EVENT BEEN MADE TO PRESS AHEAD. IF EFFORT IS NOT SUCCESSFUL, ROMANIA WOULD NOT LIKE TO BE IN SECRET

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POSITION OF FREDERICK BARBAROSSA WHO FELT HIMSELF COMPELLED

TO GO TO CANOSSA. AGAINST THIS CONTINGENCY, MAURER SAID ROMANIA MIGHT HAVE TO APPEAL TO WESTERN COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY UNITED STATES, FOR HELP. HE SAID ROMANIA WOULD DO ALL IT COULD ON ITS OWN, AND HE WAS HOPEFUL.

(F) JOINT VENTURES WITH WESTERN FIRMS ARE VERY IMPORTANT FOR ROMANIA: TO AID IN SUCCESS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, AND AS MODELS FOR COOPERATION TO WHICH ROMANIANS COULD POINT WHEN DEALING WITH USSR AND SOVIET PRESSURES FOR ROMANIAN COOPERATION IN COMECON FRAMEWORK. MOREOVER, ROMANIAN SUCCESSES WITH JOINT VENTURES COULD STIMULATE OTHER COMECON MEMBERS TO TRY THEM AND INCREASE THEIR ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE.

(G) OF COURSE, IN WP SYSTEM USSR HAS HUGE PREPONDERANCE, AND LIBERTY OF ACTION FOR OTHER MEMBERS IS MUCH LESS THAN IN ATLANTIC ALLIANCE. FOR EXAMPLE, DE GAULLE HAD WITHDRAWN FRANCE FROM MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN NATO, AND NOTHING HAD HAPPENED; DUBCEK HAD DONE FAR LESS THAN THAT. ROMANIA FEELS ITS BIGGEST PROBLEM IS USSR PRESSURES TO CONFORM, AND HOPES US WILL REFRAIN FROM ANY ACTIONS HAVING TENDENCY TO MAINTAIN OR INCREASE PRESSURES; ROMANIA IS ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT BLOC- TO- BLOC

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